

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 15, 16, 19-33 and 36-42 were pending and presented for examination. In an Office action dated March 13, 2007, all pending claims were rejected. Applicants thank the Examiner for examination of the claims and address the Examiner's comments below.

Claims 39 and 42 are cancelled herein. Applicants are amending claims 1, 3, 16, 19, 20, 22, 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, 40, and 41 herein. These changes are believed not to introduce new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested. In making these amendments, Applicants do not concede that the subject matter of such claims was in fact disclosed or taught by the cited prior art. Rather, Applicants reserve the right to pursue such protection at a later point in time.

In view of the Amendments herein and the Remarks that follow, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections, and withdraw them.

Response to Rejections Under 35 USC 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1-7, 10-11, 15, 19-27, 30, and 36-42 under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,007,085 to Malik ("Malik") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,112,203 to Bharat et al. ("Bharat"). Claims 39 and 42 have been cancelled. With respect to claims 1-7, 10-11, 15, 19-27, 30, 36-38, and 40-41, this rejection is traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to now recite "determining a weight to associate with each of the plurality of named entities based at least in part of a frequency of each of the plurality

of named entities within a data store; and creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.” These features of the claimed invention are beneficial because weighting named entities improves the performance of implicit searches, because they allow the query system to focus on entities of potentially greater interest to the user. (See Applicants’ Specification, paragraph [0041].).

Malik fails to disclose or suggest at least the feature of creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. Malik describes obtaining information correlated or corresponding to a communication, but Malik does not disclose or suggest weights associated with named entities. As such, Malik does not disclose or suggest creating an implicit search query … focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.

Bharat does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik. Namely, these references do not disclose or suggest at least the feature of creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. In Bharat, term frequency weighting is applied to determine the similarity between a query topic and a page. Col. 7, ln. 10-38. Bharat discloses determining relevancy weights of the pages that are returned as results of a query to prune the result set. Col. 4, ln. 51-58; col. 6, ln. 12-16, col. 7, ln. 10-39. There is no

suggestion or teaching in Bharat of creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, nor any suggestion or teaching in Bharat of the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight, as recited in claim 1. Thus, Bharat does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over the combination of Malik and Bharat, at least for the reasons discussed above.

Claims 19, 20 and 36 similarly recite “creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight.” All arguments advanced above with respect to claim 1 apply equally to claims 19, 20, and 36. As claims 2-7, 10-11, 15, 21-27, 30, 37-38, and 40-41 depend either directly or indirectly from the patentable independent claims 1, 20, or 36 discussed above, all arguments advanced above with respect to independent claims are hereby incorporated so as to apply to these dependent claims as well. In addition, claims 2-7, 10-11, 15, 21-27, 30, 37-38, and 40-41 recite other patentable features which further distinguish them from the prior art of record. Applicants submit that dependent claims 2-7, 10-11, 15, 21-27, 30, 37-38, and 40-41 are patentable over the prior art of record by reason of their dependency, in addition to the further patentable limitations recited therein.

Applicants respectfully submit that for at least these reasons claims 1-7, 10-11, 15, 19-27, 30, 36-38, and 40-41 are patentably distinguishable over the cited references, both alone and in combination. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner reconsider the rejection, and withdraw it.

The Examiner rejected claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 under 35 USC § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over a combination of Malik and Bharat in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,961,954 to Maybury et al. (“Maybury”). This rejection is traversed.

Maybury does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik and Bharat. Namely, none of these references disclose or suggest at least the feature of creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, the implicit search query focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. Maybury discloses searching for the most popular named entities in news stories. The user can navigate to related stories by clicking on data points on a graph of the frequency of named entities versus date. Col. 16, ln. 48-61. Maybury does not disclose or suggest creating an implicit search query based at least in part on each of the plurality of named entities and the associated weight, nor does Maybury disclose or suggest that the implicit search query be focused on a named entity with a higher associated weight more than on a named entity with a lower associated weight. Thus, Maybury does not remedy the deficiencies of Malik and Bharat. Therefore, Applicants submit that all of the independent claims, 1, 19, 20, and 36 are patentable over the combination of Malik, Bharat, and Maybury at least for the reasons discussed above. As claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 depend either directly or indirectly from the patentable independent claims 1 or 20 discussed above, all arguments advanced above with respect to independent claims are hereby incorporated so as to apply to these dependent claims as well. In addition, claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 recite other patentable features which further distinguish them from the prior art of record. Applicants submit that

dependent claims 8-9, 12-13, 16, 28-29, and 31-33 are patentable over the prior art of record by reason of their dependency, in addition to the further patentable limitations recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner reconsider the rejection, and withdraw it.

Conclusion

In sum, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims now pending are patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons given above, while not necessarily conceding any contention not specifically addressed. Applicants request reconsideration of the basis for the rejections of these claims and request allowance of them.

If the Examiner believes that for any reason direct contact with Applicants' attorney would help advance the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully Submitted,
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